

an indicia processing system for receiving the indicia image signal and for operating on the indicia image signal to extract indicia information there from; and

- 15 a cover over the indicia on the reflective medium which is transmissive to the infrared illumination and the reflected indicia image and non-transmissive to visible light, such that the indicia on the reflective medium beneath the cover are substantially undetectable to human eyesight.

10. (amended) An apparatus for reading indicia from a remote location, comprising:

- Q1
Contd. 5
- an infrared light source for providing infrared illumination;
 - a reflective medium disposed remotely from the infrared light source, the reflective medium including indicia operable to reflect the infrared illumination provided by the infrared light source, where portions of the infrared illumination reflected from the indicia comprise a reflected indicia image;
 - 10 a light sensing device disposed remotely from the reflective medium, the light sensing device for receiving the reflected indicia image and for generating an indicia image signal based thereon;
 - an indicia processing system for receiving the indicia image signal and for operating on the indicia image signal to extract indicia information there from; and
 - 15 graphic components over the indicia on the reflective medium which are transmissive to the infrared illumination and the reflected indicia image and non-transmissive to visible light, such that the indicia on the reflective medium beneath the graphic components are substantially undetectable to human eyesight.

Q2
Why

13. (amended) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the light sensing device further comprises a camera incorporating charge-coupled devices.

14. (amended) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the reflective medium is disposed at least 5 feet away from the light source and the light sensing device.

15. (amended) The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising a protective housing in which the light source and the light sensing device are disposed.

16. (amended) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the light source provides the illumination along an illumination path, the light sensing device receives the reflected indicia image along a reflected image path, and wherein an included angle between the illumination path and the reflected image path is no greater than about two
5 degrees.

17. (amended) The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising:

the light sensing device for generating the indicia image signal as a bit-mapped image of the indicia; and

the indicia processing system for receiving the bit-mapped image and for
5 operating on the bit-mapped image to extract the indicia information therefrom.

18. (amended) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the indicia further comprise a bar-code.

19. (amended) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the reflective medium further comprises a retro-reflective material.

20. (amended) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the light sensing device is operable to receive the reflected indicia image and generate the indicia image signal, and the indicia processing system is operable to operate on the indicia image signal to extract the indicia information as the reflective medium is moving relative to the light
5 source and the light sensing device.

Cancel claim 22 without prejudice or disclaimer.

23. (amended) An apparatus for reading a bar code from a remote location, comprising:

a light source for providing illumination from a fixed location;

a retro-reflective medium operable to be disposed on a vehicle or container
5 which is remote from the light source and which is moveable relative to the light source, the retro-reflective medium including the bar code

which is operable to reflect the illumination provided by the light source, where portions of the illumination reflected from the bar code comprise a reflected bar code image;

10 a light sensing device disposed at the fixed location remote from the retro-reflective medium for receiving the entire reflected bar code image simultaneously and for generating a bar code image signal based thereon; and

15 a bar code processing system for receiving the bar code image signal and for operating on the bar code image signal to extract bar code information there from as the retro-reflective medium is moving relative to the light source and the light sensing device.

24. (new) An apparatus for reading indicia disposed on a moving reflective medium, comprising:

a housing disposed remotely from the moving reflective medium, the housing including a window;

a light source disposed within the housing for providing illumination through the window to illuminate the moving reflective medium, where portions of the illumination reflected from the indicia comprise a reflected indicia image;

10 a light sensing device disposed within the housing, the light sensing device for receiving the reflected indicia image through the window and for generating an indicia image signal based thereon; and

an indicia processing system for receiving the indicia image signal and for operating on the indicia image signal to extract indicia information there from.

25. (new) An apparatus for reading indicia from a remote location, comprising:

an infrared light source for providing infrared illumination;

5 a frame configured to surround a vehicle license plate, the frame having at least a portion formed from material that is transmissive to infrared illumination and non-transmissive to visible light;

a reflective medium attached to the portion of the frame, the reflective medium including indicia operable to reflect the infrared illumination provided by the infrared light source, where portions of the infrared illumination reflected from the indicia comprise a reflected indicia image;

a light sensing device disposed remotely from the reflective medium, the light sensing device for receiving the reflected indicia image and for generating an indicia image signal based thereon; and

an indicia processing system for receiving the indicia image signal and for operating on the indicia image signal to extract indicia information there from.

26. (new) An apparatus for reading indicia from a remote location, comprising:

an infrared light source for providing infrared illumination;

a frame configured to surround a vehicle license plate;

a reflective medium attached to the frame, the reflective medium including indicia operable to reflect the infrared illumination provided by the infrared light source, where portions of the infrared illumination reflected from the indicia comprise a reflected indicia image;

graphic components formed of a material that is transmissive to the infrared illumination and the reflected indicia image, and non-transmissive to visible light, the graphic components attached to the frame and covering the indicia so as to conceal the indicia from human eyesight;

a light sensing device disposed remotely from the reflective medium, the light sensing device for receiving the reflected indicia image and for generating an indicia image signal based thereon; and

an indicia processing system for receiving the indicia image signal and for operating on the indicia image signal to extract indicia information there from.

27. (new) The apparatus of claim 26 wherein the indicia comprises an actual bar code and the graphic components comprise a decoy bar code.